

Mayor's Commission on Disabilities



**STEPHANIE
RAWLINGS-BLAKE
MAYOR**

**MAYOR STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE
SOPHIE DAGENAIS, CHIEF OF STAFF**

BETTER SCHOOLS. SAFER STREETS. STRONGER NEIGHBORHOODS.

**Mayor's Commission on Disabilities
FY 2010 Annual Report**

Lanie Vogelhut, LCSW-C, Chair

Thomas Huggins, Vice-Chair

Nollie P. Wood, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H., Executive Director

SUMMARY FY 2010 GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION

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- Ensure the accessibility of City services, facilities, programs, employment opportunities and communications.
- Ensure compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, associated laws and regulations.
- Assist City government, businesses and non-profit organizations with educational and instructional information about reasonable accommodations and universal design.

MCD STRUCTURE – COMMISSION COMMITTEES

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- Commission Development
- Access
- Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Employment
- Legislative
- Transportation
- Special Projects/Events

COMMISSION DEVELOPMENT: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Primary Goal – Identify Commission vacancies and recruit appropriate individuals to fill the vacancies.
- Accomplishments:
 - Recruited four new members. Three have been sworn in. The application for the fourth has been sent for Mayoral consideration for nomination. These new members provide expertise in access, transportation, and employment issues and serve on the Access, Transportation, and Employment Committees, respectively.

ACCESS: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Primary goal – Evaluate and improve accessibility at specified locations.
- Accomplishments:
 - Visited and evaluated three hospital sites (Mt. Washington, Bon Secours, Good Samaritan), two recreation centers (Chick Webb, Patterson Park), one shopping center (Parkside), and two parks (Patterson and Cylburn). Chick Webb Recreation Center is not handicapped accessible. It is a historic building, therefore ADA requirements are waived. Patterson Park is not ADA compliant. Funds have been allocated for FY 2012 to renovate the building and parking lot. Mt. Washington, Bon Secours, Good Samaritan, Cylburn Park, and Parkside shopping center are ADA compliant regarding handicapped parking requirements.
 - The Commission responded to over 88 complaints and requests for assistance regarding disability services, accessibility and accommodation.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Primary Goal - Educate providers that serve citizens with disabilities and special needs to understand the importance of being prepared for all types of emergency situations that can affect their quality of life.
- Accomplishments:
 - Expanded the number of providers (94 total) from 13 to 39 that use BECON as one of the primary ways to communicate with City agencies that provide alerts and services during emergency situations.
 - Conducted winter storm discussions with 24 providers to collect information on provider readiness, feedback on City response, and availability of provider resources during emergencies .
 - Distributed and trained 14 providers and individuals with disabilities and other special needs on “Emergency Evacuation Planning ” and the “Path to Disaster Readiness Guide.”

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE: ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Convened a dialysis and transportation regional provider meeting. Three committees were formed as a result of this meeting to address: 1) dialysis centers prioritization of clients; updating, storage and transfer of updated client contact information, 2) improved communications between the Health EOC and transportation providers, 3) Dialysis centers identification of accessible streets and entrances. The three resulting outcomes were: 1) Development of a standardized dialysis client data web based Emergency Operations Center tool with provider access, 2) Separate dialysis center addresses and specify accessible entrance and street information, and 3) Specify communication staffing and equipment needs for improved communication during emergencies.

EMPLOYMENT: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Primary Goal – Plan and implement a regional Career Fair and Disability Expo.
- Accomplishments:
 - Applied for and received a grant from the Maryland Department of Disabilities to partner with Baltimore County and Caring Communities, Inc. Hosted a Career Fair and Disability Expo with over 1,000 persons attending the Expo and 348 people registering for the May Career Fair.

EMPLOYMENT: ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Reviewed and identified legislation to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Baltimore City. Submitted a proposal to MCD's Legislative Committee to develop Baltimore City draft legislation similar to the Federal government's Schedule A policy for hiring people with disabilities.
- Distributed the publication "Employer Incentives for Hiring People with Disabilities" to agencies and businesses and placed it on the City's website.

LEGISLATIVE: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Primary Goal – Monitor legislation and develop testimony during the State legislative Session and City Council sessions with respect to legislation efforts that affect the lives of individuals with disabilities.
- Accomplishments:
 - State - Reviewed, evaluated, and provided recommendations on five (5) bills during the State legislative session.
 - City - Developed a process to monitor implementation of the City's Visitability Ordinance/ Building Code with the Department of Housing and Community Development.
 - City - Launched initiative to study other jurisdictions' models for a Disabled Business Enterprises (DBE) incentive to become a part of the Baltimore City Minority and Women's Business Opportunity Office.

TRANSPORTATION: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Primary Goal – To improve transportation services and parking for the handicapped by:
 - Planning and implementing handicapped parking education and enforcement days in conjunction with the Department of Transportation, Police, Parking Authority, Finance and the State Motor Vehicle Administration and Baltimore City District Court.
 - Surveying MTA Mobility Riders and identifying strategies to improve service.
 - Conducting a Public Forum on Para-Transit Services to identify Service Improvement Areas.

TRANSPORTATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS: (CONTINUED)

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- Accomplishments:
 - Held three handicapped parking educations and enforcement events. Thirty citations were issued (\$3,927 in fines) and 17 placards were confiscated.
 - Conducted a satisfaction survey of Mobility riders from The League for People with Disabilities, The Chimes, The Maryland School for the Blind and Commission on Disabilities membership. The survey shows telephone wait times continue to be a frustration. We recommend hiring and training more staff.
 - Held a Public Forum at the Workforce and Technology Center with attendance of approximately 150 citizens.
 - Toured MTA Mobility's Baltimore Operations Center.

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- In coordination with City agencies, provided services throughout the Blizzard of 2010 to insure that citizens with disabilities received required medical services. As a result, the Commission's first meeting was dedicated to reviewing the service needs identified and addressed during the blizzard. A task force of City agencies and dialysis providers now meets regularly to ensure the smooth delivery of services in future weather emergencies. The Mayor received a letter of commendation from the Maryland Department of Disabilities.
- Working through the Site Planning Review Committee, we partnered with Baltimore Housing and the Planning Department to develop 31 Visitable housing units (180 total units) for the Uplands Phase II Housing project.
- Assisted the Department of Public Works with an accessible hunting plan for the Loch Raven and Liberty Reservoir Watersheds.

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Assisted General Services and the City Hall Curator with accessible signage and ramp for the Board of Estimates.
- Identified a corporate sponsor to assist the Downtown Sailing Center with marketing and education.
- Participated in Disability Expos at the University of Maryland, Baltimore and Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, respectively.
- Partnered with The League to sponsor a magazine launch, i.d.e.a.l., (Individuals with Disabilities Express About Life) to eliminate stereotypes, and empower and educate young people with disabilities about economic success, education, relationships, sexuality and career choices.

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- In collaboration with the Mayor's Office of Human Services and the Housing Authority, the MCD submitted a U.S. HUD Housing Choice Voucher Application for 200 vouchers for rental assistance for non-elderly people with disabilities to increase housing solutions for people with disabilities. We took the lead to coordinate disability provider partnership agreements and letters of support for this application.
- Working collaboratively, the Baltimore City Public Schools and the Baltimore City Recreation Department are major sponsors of the Special Olympics Maryland, Baltimore City Program that involves athletes from age 8 to 60 in year round recreation activities such as: sailing, kayaking, bocce, basketball, soccer, softball, aquatics, equestrians, Nordic skiing, Alpine skiing, ice skating, bowling, as well as track and field training and competition. More than 2,000 student and adult athletes/volunteers participated this year. Athletes represented 54 different agencies and schools from Baltimore City.
- Assisted the Veterans Commission in revising the Veterans Day Ceremony by suggesting: 1) always including high school ROTC units, 2) developing a transition program from the War Memorial to the City Hall and Veteran statue.

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Applied for and received a mini-grant from the National Disability Institute and Internal Revenue Service for the Real Economic Impact Tour Baltimore Partnership to increase asset development, income tax preparation, and employment opportunities. The partnership, including Baltimore CASH, sponsored a Super Saturday Disability Income Tax day and the Commission assisted over 734 persons with obtaining \$859,763 in Earned Income Tax Credits. These funds also supported the May Disability Expo and Career Fair.
- Working with the Departments of Finance, Transportation, and the Parking Authority, we revised the MOU with the Office of the States Attorney on parking citations for people who have been in hospitals and nursing homes for 60 days or longer and who have their own vehicles cited and towed from their property and or in front of their residence.

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Partnered with the Maryland Department of Disabilities, Baltimore County, and Harford County on a grant application to the U.S. Rehabilitation Services Administration to create a new Center for Independent Living to assist a consumer controlled, community based, nonprofits in providing independent living services.
- Working with the Board of Elections, identified accessibility needs and funding for the Edmondson High School early voting site.
- Working with the Planning Department, developed accessibility guidelines for the new Site Planning Review Committee Guidelines and new City Building, Fire, and related Codes (Chapter 36).
- Initiated the identification of new goals and organizational structure for the Maryland Alliance of Disability Commissions and Committees.

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Commission member Lou Ann Blake coordinated the third annual Jacobus tenBroek Disability Law Symposium, *Equality, Difference, and the Right to Live in the World*, hosted by the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute. This symposium brought over 120 disability law scholars, advocates, and government officials from throughout North America to discuss the concepts of equality and difference as they relate to the disabled in employment, education, medical treatment, and access to technology. United States Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Thomas Perez and former Congressman Tony Coelho were the keynote speakers.
- Transportation committee member Earl H. Matthews, 2nd was nominated and approved to represent Baltimore City on the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board and the Baltimore Metropolitan Council to provide input on regional solutions to current and future local challenges in Transportation.

FEATURED INTER-AGENCY PROJECT

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- Make the Greenspring Avenue safer & more accessible for Foxwell Memorial Apartments, Kennedy Krieger Institute, and the community.
- Inter-Agency Accomplishments (Police, MTA, Transportation, Dept. of Public Works, Public Schools):
 - Fixed leaking pipe from Martin Luther King Elementary school.
 - Installed an accessible pedestrian bus stop and an accessible median wheelchair crossing.
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 - Instituted traffic calming through street narrowing and automobile speed monitoring.
 - Provided crime education and prevention services
 - Improved bus service to Mondawmin shopping center.

FEATURED INTER-AGENCY PROJECT

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